

Application No.: 10/673,674
Filing Date: 09/29/2003
Office Action Dated March 21, 2006
Amendment dated August 11, 2006
Attorney Docket No.: C069

Amendment to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listing of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

56. (currently amended) A method of processing over a computer network forms directed by multiple public forms users to multiple institutions of higher education, the forms being processed by a third party forms servicer that is neither one of the institutions of higher education nor one of the public forms users, the method comprising:

presenting to a form user over a computer network by a third party forms servicer in response to a request from the form user, a form directed to one of the multiple institutions of higher education, the form being generated by a forms generator that generates multiple forms corresponding to multiple institutions of higher education, ~~the forms generator generating forms that are customized in appearance and content in accordance with the preference of the institution to which each of the forms is directed and that include an indication of source corresponding to the institution to which each of the forms is directed so as to provide to the users of the forms the appearance that the forms are associated with the specific institutions to which they are directed~~, the forms including fields for the forms users to enter user information;
~~-entering user information onto the form;~~
~~-entering payment information;~~
receiving by the third party forms servicer over the computer network user information and electronic payment information entered by the user;

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processing by the third party forms servicer an electronic payment associated with the form, the processed payment being from the user to the one of the multiple institutions to which the form is directed;

storing by the third party forms servicer at least some of the user information entered on the form ~~in a user database~~; and

~~making web-based viewing or uploading of at least some of the stored user information in the user database available by the third party forms servicer to the one of the multiple institutions to which the form is directed,~~

~~the third party forms servicer providing to public form users customized forms identified with institutions of higher education and providing to the institutions web-based access to the data, while relieving the institution's burden of processing forms and payments.~~

maintaining by the third party forms servicer a transaction state for the form so as to prevent duplicate submission or payment.

Claims 57- 66 (cancelled)

67. (previously presented) The method of claim 56 further comprising:

presenting over a computer network by the third party forms servicer in response to a request from the form user, a second form directed to one of the multiple institutions of higher education; and

automatically inserting into the second form user information previously entered onto a form by the form user.

68. (cancelled)

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69. (previously presented) The method of claim 56 in which presenting to a form user over a computer network by a third party forms servicer in response to a request from the form user a form directed to one of the multiple institutions of higher education includes presenting a form including multiple pages.

70. (currently amended) The method of claim 69 further comprising verifying in accordance with validation criteria user information on each of the multiple pages as they are posted by the form user.

71. (previously presented) The method of claim 70 in which verifying in accordance with validation criteria user information on each of the multiple pages as they are posted includes verifying the user information at a client computer or at a server computer.

72. (currently amended) The method of claim 70 in which the validation criteria ~~is~~ are specified by the school-institution to which the form is directed.

73. (previously presented) The method of claim 70 further comprising verifying in accordance with first validation criteria user information on each of the multiple pages as they are posted and verifying in accordance with second validation criteria user information when a completed form is submitted.

74. (previously presented) The method of claim 73 in which verifying user information in accordance with first validation criteria includes verifying user information at a client computer and in which verifying user information in accordance with second validation criteria includes verifying user information at a server computer.

Claims 75 -92 (cancelled)

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93. (currently amended) The method of claim 84 in which entering-receiving electronic payment information includes entering-receiving electronic payment information entered onto the form.

Claim 94-119 (Cancelled)

120. (new) The method of claim 56 in which maintaining a transaction state includes maintaining a transaction state using at least one hidden field in a page of the form.

121. (new) The method of claim 120 further comprising determining whether a payment has been submitted by parsing a hidden field on the page of the form.

122. (new) The method of claim 56 in which the maintaining a transaction state includes maintaining the form within one state selected from a set of states, the set of states including an active state, a submitted state, and a paid state.

123. (new) The method of claim 56 in which presenting a form to a form user over a computer network includes presenting a form using a stateless communications conduit.

124. (new) The method of claim 123 in which the stateless communication conduit includes the World Wide Web.

125. (new) The method of claim 56 in which the state of the form is maintained in a database table.

126. (new) The method of claim 56 further comprising causing the form to enter a first state after the form user submits payment information and before the payment is settled.

127. (new) The method of claim 126 further comprising causing the form to enter a second state after the payment is settled.

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128. (new) The method of claim 126 in which causing the form to enter the first state prevents the form user from making further changes to the form.

129. (new) The method of claim 56 further comprising, if the form indicates that the form user is paying by check or is requesting a fee waiver, causing the form to enter a hold state until the check is received or the fee waiver is approved.

130. (new) The method of claim 126 further comprising transmitting the completed form to the form user to view after causing the form to enter the first state.

131. (new) The method of claim 126 in which the form enters a paid state after payment is submitted and before the payment is acknowledged by the institution or settled, and the form then enters a completed state when the form is acknowledged by the institution and the payment is settled.

132. (new) The method of claim 126 in which if the form is not settled, the form returns to an active state.

133. (new) A computer system, comprising:

a processor for carrying out computer instructions;

a computer readable memory storing instructions for performing the steps of claim 56.